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Modern Argentine Painting and Sculpture

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Foreword

For many years it has been an accepted practice for Argentine artists to study and, in some cases, to settle in Europe. Even today Argentine art is generally known to us only through the work of the few who live and have gained their reputations here. Successive developments in European painting were brought back to Buenos Aires to establish themselves slowly and without forming a distinct national style. Within the past decade, however, there has been a great upsurge of cultural activity in Argentina, especially among young painters and sculptors. Many have travelled extensively in Europe, the United States and Latin America, and have been greatly influenced by the current international abstract style. They handle it in a vigorous and original manner and we can already see in the work of these artists a boldness of form and colour which characterises what is now recognizable as an emerging national style in both their figurative and abstract art.

This exhibition gives us our first opportunity to see for ourselves these latest developments and we are deeply indebted to Dr. Rafael Squirru, Director of the Museum of Modern Art in Buenos Aires, for all his work in making for us a balanced and representative selection of the painting and sculpture now being produced in his country, and for providing both an introductory note and detailed documentation for this catalogue. We are also most grateful to Miss Catherine Ward for her invaluable assistance in translating and preparing the catalogue material. In addition we should like to thank Professor Blas Gonzalez, National Director of Culture; His Excellency Mazar Barnett, Director of Cultural Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Culture; and Dr. Aldo Armando Cocca, Secretary of Culture and Social Activity of the Municipality of Buenos Aires, without whose help and enthusiasm this exhibition would never have reached us.

G.W.

An Introductory Note by Dr. Rafael Squirru, Director of the Museum of Modern Art of Buenos Aires

To speak about oneself is always a risky job and, though I may not be the author of any of these works, they express the self of my country, the self to which I purport to belong. The fact that we have the European in us has led to many misunderstandings. Critics confronted with Argentine art are apt to be supercilious, they often resent the fact that we are not more picturesque. It is rather as though the Romans resented Seneca or Trajan, or the Greeks had disowned St. Paul.

We belong to Western Culture, even if the books don't say so; even if we are different (we hope to be, at least subtly different); even if our blood is partly that of the Atlantes who first populated this continent. If we cannot grow without incorporating our soil and our stars, neither can we grow if we decry our blood, and we have Europe in our veins. For us London or Edinburgh, Paris or Madrid, Florence or Rome are not exotic places; they were built by our ancestors and we claim them as part of ourselves. Not to understand this means refusing to understand our art. But this is where the story begins, not where it ends.

I spoke of assuming our soil, our nativeness; surely this means endowing whatever message we may have with a different accent. We speak many languages; the spectator can confirm this. We are obliged to. This is something we are proud of; we believe it opens our eyes wider. The "typical" Argentine spirit is elastic, comfortable with Mexican, abstract or informalist language. We at least have learnt that languages are instruments, through which artists should speak, but nothing more than instruments. We have learned to hear beyond the sound. We are not scandalized by translations, good or bad. We can enjoy Sophocles even in a cheap edition.

Perhaps all this implies some kind of a message for Europe today. We Europeans have incorporated more primitive sensibilities and some maybe not so primitive (Aztecs, Incas). These are the results. They are fruits of love and so is this exhibition. We hope the love gets through.

Paintings

Luis Barragan
Born 1914. Visited Europe in nineteen-thirties. Founder member of Orion Group of surrealist painters. Many one-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires during past 30 years.

1 Painting
Oil 30 x 40 cm (11¾ x 15¾ in.)
2 Painting
Oil 24 x 30 cm (9½ x 11¾ in.)
3 Figures in Gold
Oil 30 x 40 cm (11¾ x 15¾ in.)

Ricardo Carpani
Born 1930. Travelled in Europe and Latin America, 1951-53. First one-man exhibition in Buenos Aires, 1957. Founder member of Espartaco Group with which he now exhibits.

4 Head
Oil 120 x 56 cm (47¼ x 22 in.)
5 Assassination of Chacho Penaloza
Oil 200 x 150 cm (78¾ x 59 in.)
6 Those Who Hope
Oil 200 x 150 cm (78¾ x 59 in.)

Luis Centurion
Born 1922. Self-taught. Many one-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires from 1947.

7 Nude
Oil 70 x 100 cm (27½ x 39¼ in.)
8 Nude
Oil 70 x 100 cm (27½ x 39¼ in.)
9 Nude
Oil 80 x 100 cm (31½ x 39¼ in.)

Antonio Fernandez Muro
Born 1920, in Madrid. Settled in Argentina 1938. Visited Paris in 1948. Travelled in Europe and USA on UNESCO grant, 1957-58. National Guggenheim Award, 1960. Many one-man exhibitions since 1944 in Buenos Aires, also in Madrid, Washington and New York.

10 Horizontal Red
Oil 130 x 162 cm (51¼ x 63¾ in.)

Alberto Greco
Born 1931. Studied at National School of Fine Arts, Buenos Aires. Visited Paris on French Government grant, 1954. One-man exhibitions: Paris, 1955; Buenos Aires, 1960. Has painted murals in Buenos Aires. Associated with the Informalist Group.

11 Painting
Collage 207 x 143 cm (81½ x 56¼ in.)
12 Painting
Collage 207 x 143 cm (81½ x 56¼ in.)
13 Painting
Collage 149 x 119 cm (58¾ x 47 in.)

Sarah Grilo
Born 1920.
Lived in Paris and Madrid 1948-50.
Travelled in Europe and USA 1957-58.
Six one-man shows from 1949 in Buenos Aires, Madrid and New York.

14 Two Circles
Oil 130 x 130 cm (51¼ x 51¼ in.)

Alfredo Hlito
Born 1923. Studied at National School of Fine Arts, Buenos Aires. Visited Europe, 1952. Founder member of Arte Concreto Group, 1956. One-man exhibition in Buenos Aires, 1960.

15 Painting
Oil 80 x 130 cm (31½ x 51¼ in.)
16 Painting
Oil 70 x 122 cm (27½ x 48 in.)

Kenneth Kemble
Born 1923. Studied with Raul Russo in Buenos Aires. Visited Paris in 1950 where he studied with Lhote and Zadkine. Has travelled widely in Europe, USA, and Latin America. One-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires, 1960 and 1961.

17 Accumulation
Oil 180 x 195 cm (71 x 76¾ in.)
18 Black Circulating, 2
Oil 180 x 180 cm (71 x 71 in.)
19 Lots of Black
Oil 180 x 100 cm (71 x 39½ in.)

Romulo Maccio
Born 1931. Self-taught. Six one-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires from 1956.

20 Painting
Oil 150 x 197 cm (59 x 77½ in.)
21 Painting
Oil 198 x 150 cm (78 x 59 in.)

Eduardo Mac Entyre
Born 1929. Professional typographer and industrial designer. One-man exhibition in Buenos Aires, 1957. Exhibited with Vidal, 1960.

22 Painting
Oil 66 x 110 cm (26 x 43¼ in.)
23 Painting
Oil 100 x 100 cm (39½ x 39½ in.)
24 Painting
Oil 100 x 100 cm (39½ x 39½ in.)

Federico Martino
Born 1930. Studied at National School of Fine Arts, Buenos Aires. Visited Paris on French Government grant in 1957 and travelled in Europe in 1958. One-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires, 1959 and 1960.

25 Tiempismo
Oil 150 x 80 cm (59 x 31½ in.)
26 Tiempismo
Oil 200 x 70 cm (78¾ x 27½ in.)

Mario Mollari
Born 1930. Travelled in Europe and Latin America. One-man exhibition in Buenos Aires, 1957. Founder member of Espartaco Group, with which he now exhibits.

27 Labourers
Oil 130 x 160 cm (51¼ x 63 in.)
28 Peons
Oil 130 x 160 cm (51¼ x 63 in.)
29 Rest
Oil 170 x 130 cm (67 x 51½ in.)

Rene Moron
Born 1929. Studied at National School of Fine Arts, Buenos Aires. Has painted murals in Buenos Aires. Exhibits with the Sur Group.

30 Elements in Space
Oil 200 x 100 cm (78¾ x 39½ in.)
31 Symbols
Oil 92 x 92 cm (36¼ x 36¼ in.)
32 Symbols
Oil 92 x 92 cm (36¼ x 36¼ in.)

Luis Noe
Born 1933. Abandoned law studies to work in studio of Horacio Butler. Three one-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires from 1959.

33 Scene of the Passion
Oil 150 x 200 cm (59 x 78¾ in.)
34 Temptations of St. Anthony
Oil 200 x 250 cm (78¾ x 98½ in.)

Miguel Ocampo
Born 1922. Professional architect. Started painting in 1944. Lived in Rome, 1956-59. Nine one-man exhibitions from 1950 in Buenos Aires, also in Rio de Janeiro, Rome, Paris and New York.

35 Painting
Oil 97 x 130 cm (38¼ x 51¼ in.)
36 Painting
Oil 97 x 130 cm (38¼ x 51¼ in.)

Leopoldo Presas
Born 1915. Studied with Lino Spilimbergo. Visited Europe in 1950. Many one-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires from 1946 and one in New York in 1955.

37 Composition
Oil 120 x 120 cm (47¼ x 47¼ in.)
38 Figures
Oil 120 x 120 cm (47¼ x 47¼ in.)

Mario Pucciarelli
Born 1928. Lived in London, 1954-56. Exhibited with Informalist Group, 1959. One-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1960.

39 De Mon Vertu
Oil 100 x 100 cm (39½ x 39½ in.)
40 Painting
Oil 100 x 100 cm (39½ x 39½ in.)

Raul Russo
Born 1912. Studied at National School of Fine Arts, Buenos Aires. Several one-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires.

41 The Net
Oil 100 x 70 cm (39½ x 27½ in.)
42 Landscape
Oil 100 x 75 cm (39½ x 29½ in.)
43 The Harbour at Algecira
Oil 122 x 91 cm (48 x 35¾ in.)

Luis Seoane
Born 1910. Studied law and painting in Spain. Settled in Argentina, 1937. Prolific output of graphic work. Has done many murals in mosaic and other media. Has written short stories, plays and poetry. Many one-man exhibitions of painting and engraving in Buenos Aires, also in Lima, Sao Paolo, Carracas, New York and London.

44 The Gardener
Oil 116 x 89 cm (45¾ x 35 in.)
45 Figure
Oil 116 x 89 cm (45¾ x 35 in.)
46 The Window, 1
Oil 100 x 81 cm (39½ x 31 in.)
47 The Window, 2
Oil 100 x 81 cm (39½ x 31 in.)

Clorindo Testa
Born 1923. Practising architect. Travelled in Italy and Spain, 1949-51. Seven one-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires from 1952.

48 Painting
Oil 70 x 100 cm (27½ x 39½ in.)
49 Painting
Oil 100 x 100 cm (39½ x 39½ in.)

Miguel Angel Vidal
Born 1927. Studied at National Academy of Fine Arts, Buenos Aires. One-man exhibition in Buenos Aires, 1959. Exhibited with Mac Entyre, 1960.

50 Generative Painting
Oil 146 x 146 cm (57½ x 57½ in.)
51 Generative Painting
Oil 117 x 117 cm (46 x 46 in.)
52 Generative Painting
Oil 80 x 80 cm (31½ x 31½ in.)

Sculpture

Libero Badii
Born 1916, in Italy. Settled in Argentina, 1937. Studied at National School of Fine Arts and National School of Decorative Arts in Buenos Aires. Awarded scholarship to travel in Latin America, 1944. Visited Europe, 1948 and 1949. One-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires, 1954, 1955 and 1957.

53 The Four Seasons
Bronze 40 x 46 x 20 cm
(15¾ x 18 x 8 in.)
54 City Figures
Bronze 37 x 17 x 78 cm
(14½ x 6¾ x 28¾ in.)

Pablo Curatella Manes
Born 1891. Studied at Academy of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires; later studied in Florence, Rome and in Paris with Bourdelle, 1911-18. Lived in Paris 1920-47. Influenced by Cubist movement, especially Juan Gris. Represented in many mixed exhibitions in Paris, 1930-40. Murals for Argentine Pavilion at Paris Exhibition in 1937, and in Buenos Aires in 1960.

55 Projection 7
Bronze 35 x 25 x 19 cm
(13¾ x 9¾ x 7½ in.)

Noemi Gerstein
Studied under Bigatti and Zadkine in Paris on French Government grant, 1950-51. Eight one-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires from 1948 and one in New York in 1960.

56 Elevation of a Rectangle
anticorodal 35 x 50 x 55 cm
(13¾ x 19¾ x 21½ in.)
57 Out of the Depth
iron 85 x 60 x 70 cm (33½ x 23½ x 27½ in.)
58 Someone
iron 16 x 18 x 60 cm (6¼ x 7 x 23½ in.)

Enio Iommi
Born 1926. Studied under his father, an Italian sculptor. Founder member of Arte Concreto Group, 1945. Several one-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires during past ten years.

59 Planes and Space Sphere
iron with bronze 40 x 35 x 84 cm
(15¾ x 13¾ x 33 in.)

Gyula Kosice
Born 1924, in Czechoslovakia. Settled in Argentina, 1928. Studied painting and drawing in Buenos Aires. Published various works concerning the visual arts and some poetry. Creator of hydraulic sculpture. One-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires in 1947 and 1953, and in Paris and London in 1960.

60 Monument
aluminium 61 x 13 x 21 cm
(24 x 5 x 8¼ in.)
61 Hydraulic Relief
glass, aluminium and water
72 x 56 x 3 cm (28½ x 34 x 12¼ in.)

Manual Teijeiro
Born 1913, in Spain. Studied painting and engraving in Madrid. Settled in Argentina, 1940. Many one-man exhibitions in Buenos Aires from 1941. also in Sao Paolo, Panama, New York, Barcelona and Rome.

62 Orthogonal Spacialism
iron 90 x 76 x 61 cm (33½ x 30 x 24 in.)
63 Dynamic Spacialism
iron 74 x 35 x 31 cm (29 x 13¾ x 12¼ in.)